



Disability Federation of Ireland

Newsletter

An Advocate for the Voluntary Disability Sector.
Supporting Organisations to Enable People with Disabilities

January / February 2009

Protecting Service Provision in the face of Ongoing Cuts

There is no doubt but we are in challenging economic times. There is a deficit of €2 billion in the public finances for 2009. Services to disabled people and their families were decimated in the 80's during the last recession and there is every possibility that the same will happen again. This gives us right to fear that the infrastructure of supports and services that have been built up in recent years to support people with disabilities will be eroded in the efforts of Government to stabilise the public finances.

On top of the 1% cut in '08, Budget '09 introduced a further 1% cut for '09 and we have just learned that the HSE has sanctioned a further 1% to take full affect in this year.

Social infrastructure can be easily and quietly downgraded and very difficult to rebuild. I witnessed this downgrading on a day-by-day basis in the 80's and it was not pleasant to witness. Once staff and expertise is lost it is very difficult to get them back and there are inflationary pressures built up in trying to fast track such initiatives. If there is a backlog in the provision of services, this will create immense difficulties for hundreds of thousands of people all around the country – people who now have understandable expectations based on commitments made and who have real outstanding needs.

In this climate there are only two certainties: firstly the level of unmet need is growing and secondly there are no assumptions from our past and current ways of working that will assist us from here. We must however play our part in securing the provision of high quality supports and services to people with disabilities. How we do our work, governance and management, what other organisations and agencies we work with and the cost base of our activities all have to be seriously dealt with if we are to maximise essential service delivery to the people we are dedicated to serving.

DFI is working hard to develop essential and practical support for organisations to assist in the more difficult times that are ahead.

John Dolan
CEO

Inside This Issue

DFI Conference 3rd March 2009

COUNT ME IN!

Including People with a Disability in
Local Government Structures and Services

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Including People with a Disability in Local Government Structures and Services

DFI National Conference

DFI National Conference, assisted by Carlow, Cavan, Fingal, Limerick and South Dublin, County Councils

Date: 3rd March, 2009

Venue: Hilton Dublin Kilmainham, Inchicore Road, Kilmainham. Dublin 8

Cost: €100

For brochure and booking go to www.regonline.com/dfi

Purpose of the Conference

The purpose of this event is to bring stakeholders together to discuss how we can all work collaboratively to ensure that the wide variety of needs of people with disabilities are represented within local government structures, and to ensure that the full range of services and facilities offered by Local Authorities and other State Agencies at local level can adapt to meet these needs.

Organisational Health Check

DFI is developing a new service for member organisations entitled “Organisational Health Check”. During ‘09 we will assist organisations on a one to one basis to conduct a review of their organisations capacity and governance.

We have developed this service in response to the growing level of regulation of voluntary disability organisations. Evidence of this regulation can be seen in the recommendations of the Comptroller and Auditor Generals Report on disability services, the Charities Legislation and the draft Grant Aid and Service Level Agreements being developed by the HSE.

This service is supported by a grant we received from the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and Dermot O’Donnell DFI Support Officer – Support for Organisations is leading this project.

If you are interested in learning more about the service please contact Dermot or one of the Support Officers. There will be a limited number of places available for the Organisational Health Checks in ‘09.

It is intended that the Organisational Health Check will lay the foundations to roll out a quality assurance system called **Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations** (PQASSO) with our member organisations. This system was designed specifically for the voluntary sector and will help members to analyse their strengths and weaknesses, and to set about continuously improving their quality of service. It will also help to create an evidence base for the sector. More information on PQASSO will be announced over the course of the year.

Charities Bill Update

The Charities Bill was passed by the Dáil on 11th February. A number of amendments were approved by the Seanad and further discussion took place on 17th February. Following this the Bill will be sent to President McAleese who will sign it into law. Updates in Relation to the Charities Bill can be viewed on the DFI website. www.disability-federation.ie

Support For Organisations

Identifying Savings

Why, in the Disability Sector, are we surprised by bad news? Bad news, poor services and lack of money for services are the very reason most of us volunteer for work in this sector anyway. We know this road better than most, the diversions, the potholes and endless delays.

In this time of financial crises we could be drawn into the frenzy of putting all our personnel resources and attention into counting the pennies and saving the pounds. While it is very desirable, and indeed necessary, to operate efficiently and within budget, making savings as and where we can, let us not forget that our strength lies in our organisations values. We have come together not primarily for financial reasons but to support the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Organisations will have been contacted by now by the HSE in relation to the 1% cuts. In reality, given the decreases in funding over the past couple of years many organisations are developing budgets for 2009 factoring in a much larger cut than 1%. Organisations are also experiencing a decrease in fundraised income. Regardless of the rights and wrongs of these cuts, all economic indicators suggest the need for long term retrenchment.

Each organisation knows the nuts and bolts of its own income and expenditure best, and thus will know best where savings can realistically be achieved. Some suggestions of where savings could be identified are listed below; in addition to these are areas such as joint working / purchasing, shared resources between organisations. .

Here are a number of ways that organisations can begin to introduce cost saving measure for the year ahead:

- **Travel**

By their very nature some of our services require a lot of travel. Travel can only be cut by so much. Through careful planning travel to meetings can be reduced. The use of teleconferencing can result in substantial savings and increased attendance.

- **Telephone and Utility Bills**

Examine all utility bills. Telephone including mobile phone bills can be a very expensive component of services provided, examine all contracts bundle deals etc. and look around for a better package.

- **Rent**

Could rent be renegotiated? Could premises be shared with other organisations? DFI supports a range of projects that are working to develop shared accommodation in Castlebar, Sligo, Donegal, Leitrim and Cork.

- **Insurance**

There a range of insurance products offered to Community and Voluntary organisations. Some are available through your local County Development Boards, these schemes are called, *Group*

Insurance Scheme for Community and Voluntary Sector. Another is supported by The Wheel, more information at this link <http://www.wheel.ie/user/content/view/full/3658>.

- **Staff**

Make sure all staff understand the realities of where we now find ourselves, ask for their ideas and you may be surprised how many good ideas come up. Involve your whole organisation in being careful with resources through team work and personal responsibility.

Many of us have been through times like these before and we can remember that hard times often throw up opportunities as well as problems; our work now is to deal with those problems while taking advantage of the opportunities.

If your organisation has identified innovative ways of saving costs please submit your suggestions to be published in future newsletters.

Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups Training

The Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups has released details of the Training Programme for Spring 2009. For a full description of Management Training Programme courses see

www.carmichaelcentre.ie/trainingandsupport/courses.php.

The Carmichael Centre also offer other services to their members. Members and associated groups nationwide can access advice and practical assistance concerning their day to day operations as well as receive assistance with long term planning and governance issues.

Course Title	Date
Branding for Community & Voluntary Groups (NEW)	Tues 17th Feb & Tues 3rd March (2 days)
Taking Effective Minutes	Mon 23rd February
Writing Successful Grant Applications (NEW)	Thurs 5th March
Time Management	Fri 6th March
Board Roles & Responsibilities	Mon 9th March
Board Roles & Responsibilities	Wed 11th March (CORK)
Setting up a Charitable Organisation (NEW)	Thurs 12th March
Diversity & Equality Awareness (NEW)	Fri 13th March
Managing Organisational Change (NEW)	Thurs 19th & Fri 20th March (2 days)
The Media as your Ally (NEW)	Wed 25th March
Project Management	Thu 26th March
Good Practice for Management Committees (NEW)	Mon 20th April (GALWAY)

Conflict Resolution	Thu 23rd April
Finance for Non-Financial People	Fri 24th April
Financial Reporting for Charitable Organisations	Wed 29th April
Dealing with Grievance & Disciplinary	Thu 30th April
Writing a Marketing Plan (NEW)	Thu 14th May
Effective Board Meetings	Mon 18th May
Corporate Fundraising	Wed 20th May
Producing an Annual Report	Thu 21st May

The Wheel

The Wheel will be continuing training in Spring 2009. The Wheel will continue the programmes of *Getting to Grips With Governance*, *openIT* and the *CEO Breakfasts*. The Wheel is also introducing a series of workshops on *Risk Management* and an exploration into the use of new and social media.

For more information see: http://www.wheel.ie/user/events/training_events_calendar_spring_2009.

Course Title	Date	Location
Getting to Grips With Governance	10 th March 7 th April	Galway Dublin Athlone Dublin
CEO Breakfast Meeting	12 th February 31 st March	Dublin Cork
Social Media For Charities	17 th February	Dublin
Introducing Risk Management	3 rd March 4 th March 25 th March	Waterford Limerick Dublin
Open IT	5 th March 11 th March	Dublin Cork

Managing your Resources in a Recession	12 th March	Dublin
Employment Law Briefing	1 st April	Dublin

HEALTH

Draft Service Level and Grant Aid Agreements

In December the HSE presented revised drafts of the Service Level and Grant Aid Agreements.

At recent meetings with the HSE Disability Working Group on the Agreements we were informed that the National Steering Group want to progress with the introduction of the Agreements in early 2009. They do not now propose making any changes to the clauses. This is problematic for us. We were informed that Part 1(The Clauses) which form the generic part of the Agreements for any and all organisations / agencies be they voluntary, private etc. that do business with the HSE is the most difficult part for us to influence. However, two further changes have been applied to Part 1 that should be noted:

- Removing the obligation on organisations to co-operate with research.
- It is now only the chief executive of the HSE who can trigger the process leading to the replacement of a Manager.

The HSE have stated that they intend to commence the introduction of the Agreements with disability organisations for their 2009 funding. They are proposing initiating this process through Local Health Offices initially with the filling out of Schedules. This does not imply that the organisation is signing the Agreement. Details of the arrangements with individual organisations and around specific services will be contained in the Schedules.

DFI has reiterated a number of other concerns with the agreements. These include:

- The Clauses, Schedules and Protocols are all integral parts of the Agreement.
- Ultimately each organisation has to make a decision and hopefully DFI will be in a position to advise in this regard.
- The Agreements between the HSE and Organisations must be sensitive to the different levels of funding given to organisations and / or the different types of services that organisations provide.
- There needs to be consistency and clarity in terms of how Part 1 of the Agreements are applied and Schedule Templates are completed.
- The HSE originally proposed the Agreements as having two parts: Clauses (Part 1) and Schedules (Part 2). DFI, The Federation of Voluntary Bodies and Not for Profit Business Association have insisted on the need for a set of protocols against which the agreements are applied and implemented.

- There must be recognition of the transition period needed to build capacity, both in the HSE and in the organisations, to the introduction of the Agreements.
- There must be a balance between the business focus of the Agreements with recognition of the wider contribution of the voluntary disability organisations to the provision of services to people with disabilities. It was discussed that some of these issues may be addressed through written correspondence from the HSE.

DFI had proposed that these Agreements would be time limited to 2 years after which they could be fully renegotiated. The HSE is now proposing review after one year.

HSE are proposing putting in place an oversight group on implementation over the first year which could comprise the four lead Local Health Managers representatives of PCCC Contracts / Business Unit and the voluntary disability sector.

DFI continues to work closely with the Federation of Voluntary Bodies and the Not for Profit Business Association during these discussions with the HSE. We are currently drafting these protocols to be considered by the HSE, to guide the implementation of the Agreements. The HSE expects these Protocols to be agreed within the next few weeks before any organisations are asked to sign an Agreement.

As previously advised it continues to be DFI's view that current arrangements will operate until this process is brought to conclusion.

The HSE will provide an information afternoon to our member organisations on the 18th of February at 2.00p.m. in DFI Head Offices. Lunch will be available from 1.30p.m. Please confirm your attendance by contacting [johndoyle@disability-federation.ie](mailto: johndoyle@disability-federation.ie).

For further information on the SLAs please contact your DFI Support Officer.

Rehabilitation Strategy

Submission to Department of Health and Children

A Submission has recently been made by DFI to the Department of Health and Children Strategy for the Provision of Rehabilitation Services.

DFI welcomed the Government's commitment to the development of a Strategy, in the context of vision and goals outlined in the National Disability Strategy and Towards 2016. It was pointed out, however, that Government must ensure that this Strategy is developed as an implementation plan, to be put into practice as quickly as possible, and to ensure that it does not remain an aspirational policy document to be referred to only from time to time.

DFI highlighted a number of issues to be addressed in the Strategy. These included the necessity for a comprehensive definition of the term 'rehabilitation', the scope of the proposed strategy, the necessity for consultation with stakeholders, service provision in the community, development of standards in supports and services, and issues around funding for the implementation of the strategy.

DFI emphasised the role of rehabilitation services and supports in the lives of people with disabilities, and noted that effective rehabilitation will enable these individuals to eventually return to and participate in community life. This will lead to greatly improved quality of life and resultant health and social gain. DFI also emphasised that Government must now grasp the opportunity provided by the framework of the National Disability Strategy to ensure that into the future effective and continuing rehabilitation services will be available for those who need them.

The Submission document will be available shortly on the DFI website www.disability-federation.ie.

TOWARDS 2016 / NDS

Advisory Group on the National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities

The Advisory Group, on which DFI and other voluntary as well as statutory bodies are represented, met in January after an interval of six months. The Group advises the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on the development of the housing strategy for people with disabilities, due for completion in 2009.

Legislation

Departmental officials gave a presentation on the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. They outlined the provisions submitted to the Dáil while pointing out that the Bill will be amended before being enacted, likely later in the year. The Bill has two main parts. The sections concerned with the governance of social housing empower the Minister to direct or to guide local authorities in assessing social housing need and allocating social housing to those eligible for it.

The other part of the Bill focuses on certain new housing schemes (the Rental Accommodation Scheme and a new Incremental Purchase Scheme) and amends rules regarding antisocial behaviour.

DFI expressed concern that while the legislation might improve the efficiency of social housing governance, it would not enable people with disabilities to 'catch up' and live as much as possible like others in Ireland. It would not embed the needs of people with a disability in the system of housing provision, but leave them effectively as an 'add-on'. Please see Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Bill 2008 Article below.

Research

There were presentations about progress on three research projects: an examination of the role of the private rented sector; a review of good practice models and a study on accommodation for people with mental health difficulties. The Centre for Housing Research is managing the work and subcommittees of the Advisory Group oversee the projects.

Strategy Statement

Drafts prepared by the Department introducing different chapters of the report focussing mainly on the context for the strategy and its vision. These were discussed briefly and positively.

Updates

- The public consultation on Part M of the Building Code was again promised to start shortly.
- The disability certificate requirement for new commercial premises is not yet in effect; fire safety matters have to be resolved first.
- The Department is finalising the remit for the independent review of the revised housing adaptation grant schemes. The aim is to complete the review before Summer. There will be consultation.

To obtain a copy of a presentation given at the meeting by email, please contact Lillian Buchanan at lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie.

Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2008

DFI has submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government proposed amendments to the Housing Bill. At present the needs of people with a disability are neglected in housing legislation. The Bill drafted by the Department only refers to this group in Section 43 which provides for the clawback of housing adaptation grants, the amount depending on when the adapted dwelling is sold. DFI's amendments are aimed at requiring local authorities explicitly to include people with a disability and the voluntary organisations working with them in planning and implementing social housing programmes.

DFI intends to inform interested T.D.s about its proposals when the Bill is looked at in detail at Dáil committee stage, before being finalised for enactment. For an electronic copy of DFI's submission, please contact Lillian Buchanan at lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

Social Partnership

Due to the challenges posed by the economic crisis there have been intense engagements across the social partnership process. A number of meetings were scheduled with the National Economic and Social Council in efforts to provide Government with a workable framework through which to stabilise the economy. Government also engaged with the CV Pillar on a number of Bi-Laterals seeking their input into the drafting of this Framework. DFI provided independent submissions to Government and Senior Officials across a number of Departments as well as contributing to the joint work of the Pillar. Simultaneously DFI engaged with the media in efforts to ensure disability remains a priority and protected as much as possible in the current climate.

Throughout this period DFI has been highlighting the importance of preventing a degradation of public services and infrastructure, recalling the long-lived, adverse impact of cuts during the 1980s recession. We have stressed the need to reassure people with disabilities, who feel especially vulnerable. A Government programme of measures to demonstrate how it will protect the vulnerable will be an essential element of any recovery package and DFI will continue to work through the social partnership pillar and other fora to get such a programme.

National Economic and Social Council

NESC is contributing to the effort to find an equitable, sustainable and forward-looking recovery package by developing an analysis and recommendations for action that are endorsed by all the social partners. As a member of NESC, DFI has been pointing out that the focus of the adjustment must not be a contraction of public services. The long term adverse consequences for people with a disability caused by the service cutbacks during the 1980s are still with us. DFI comments also stress the relevance of NESC's own learning about the complementary relationship between social support programmes and economic success in addressing the current crisis.

Community and Voluntary Pillar and Education

The C&V Pillar's Education Linkage Group, on which DFI is represented, has obtained agreement from the Department of Education and Science (DES) for a bilateral meeting. Issues that DFI will raise at that meeting include

- DES project planning for the full implementation of the EPSEN Act.
- Achievements through collaboration with the HSE in assessing needs and planning services for children.
- Monitoring of unmet special educational needs
- Actions aimed at reducing early school leaving and improving gateways to third level education, and outcomes

Home Care Support Packages: Call for Submissions

The National and Economic Social Forum (NESF) is calling for submissions on the implementation of Home Care Packages. Have you information and stories to share with the project team? NESF would like to know more about your experiences of the home care package initiative. The Project Team would like to hear from a range of people and organisations, involved in any way with home care packages, to know more about their benefits and drawbacks.

Submissions to the Project Team can be made by way of letter or email. For more information or to make a submission, please contact: Dr Anne-Marie McGauran, NESF, 16 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. t. 01 8146361, Lo-call: 1890203006, e: info@nesf.ie **The closing date for receipt of completed submissions is Friday 20th February 2009.**

Background: The NESF has been asked by Government to study what leads to successful or unsuccessful implementation of Government policies. To this end NESF has set up a Project Team to look at the implementation of the Home Care Package Initiative. They will look at a number of case studies to see how the Home Care Support Scheme is delivered in different sites.

The Government provides €4.7 billion of funding for a range of measures to help older people to live independently in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. These measures include home care packages, the home help service, meals on wheels, community intervention teams and respite / day care services. A key policy supported by this funding is the Home Care Support Scheme. Each HSE Administrative Area has responsibility for the operation of its own Scheme which means that Schemes vary in different parts of the country depending on the local population, individual needs, the personnel available to deliver services and demand in each area. The current research will allow the NESF to identify best practice in policy delivery, and provide learning for better service delivery in future.

DFI Involvement: Kris Dhondt from RehabCare sits on the Project Team representing DFI members with an interest in this area. Kris can be contacted on 01 2057380 or by email on Kris.Dhondt@rehabcare.ie.

If you would like to make a contribution to DFI's submission to the review of home care packages, please contact Joan O'Donnell on 01 4250122 or email joanododnnell@disability-federation.ie.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Department of Social and Family Affairs Disability Consultative Forum Update

The most recent meeting of the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) Disability Consultative Forum took place on Wednesday 26th November 2008. The following provides a synopsis of the issues raised at the meeting.

Transfer of Disability Payments from HSE to DSFA

Disability Allowances will continue to be transferred from the Department of Health and Children to the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) in 2009. This will include Domiciliary Care Allowance (DCA) and the Respite Care Grant. In relation to DCA the following important points should be noted:

- An Expert Monitoring Group involving the Departments Chief Medical Advisor, representatives from the HSE along with other specialist advisors has been set up. This group is working towards the production of consistent guidelines for the scheme. They are expected to report shortly and it is planned that the report will be published.
- There should be greater consistency in medical assessments when transferred to DSFA as only 1 or 2 Medical Assessors will be responsible for assessing all claims compared with 32 Medical Officers currently doing so in the HSE.
- It is anticipated that medical assessments will be done on the basis of diagnostic reports with limited need for examination of children.
- The means test on child's means will be abolished.
- Payment will be a monthly payment similar to Child Benefit paid on the third Tuesday of each month.
- The quality of records held by HSE vary and it may be necessary for them to contact customers to confirm PPSN and Date of Birth details.

There is no date to transfer Mobility Allowance at the moment due to internal Departmental issues.

Transfer from Personalised Payable Order Books (PPO) to Electronic Information Transfer (EIT) payment method

The Department of Social and Family Affairs outlined the plans to transfer from Personalised Payable Order Books (PPO) to Electronic Information Transfer (EIT) payment method. Invalidity Pension (30,000 customers) and Carers Allowance (20,000 customers) will transfer in February while Disability Allowance (55,000 customers) will transfer in March. A notice will be issued to all recipients of this payment who are currently receiving payment by PPO in advance of the transfer.

The next meeting of the DSFA Consultative Forum will take place early in the New Year.

This information has been provided by the DSFA to your DFI representative Louise Mc Cann at the DSFA Disability Consultative Forum. For more information on DFI work with the DSFA please contact Louise directly at louisemccann@disability-federation.ie or 01 4250126.

NATIONAL/LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local Elections

On the 5th June 2009 the Government Elections will be held.

The Local and European elections are a real opportunity for people with disabilities to make their voice heard. We will not be the soft option for cut-backs again. We went through that in the eighties when disability services were virtually wiped out!

Now however we have the Disability Act, the National Disability Strategy and Towards 2016, all of which are focused on enabling people with disabilities to participate on an equal basis. And all of which make important commitments to people with disabilities. Local authorities are crucial to the carrying through of those commitments at a local level. And we intended to hold Government to those commitments!

Leading up to these elections DFI will be engaging with Local Election Candidates and Political Parties on the following issues:

- Working with Voluntary Disability Organisations.
- Housing for People with Disabilities.
- Access to Services and Facilities.
- Physical Access.
- Coordination of Services to People with Disabilities.
- Training and Support for Voluntary Disability Organisations.
- Government Employment Schemes.

DFI will be meeting with all parties to highlight the need to safeguard and maintain the current level of services provided to people with disabilities.

DFI will be working with its members to support them in their lobbying and our election literature will be available shortly.

DFI will also be working to influence policy during the European Union and Community and Voluntary Forum Elections 2009.

The DFI Election Manifesto, in which we spell out our demands in detail, will be launched at our Conference on 3rd March in Dublin.

GENERAL NEWS AND EVENTS

Joint Conference – The Neurological Alliance of Ireland and Care Alliance Ireland (March 10th 2009)

Date for your Diary - A National Conference as part of Brain Awareness Week 2009

Date - Time: Tuesday March 10th 2009. 10:30am - 4pm

Location: Radisson Hotel, Golden Lane, D 2.

Title of Conference: *Always on my Mind – Caring for a Person with a Neurological Condition*

Further details to will be made available on www.carealliance.ie and www.nai.ie.

Forum on End of Life in Ireland- The Irish Hospice Foundation

The Irish Hospice Foundation has started a national conversation on End of Life. It wants to find out the main issues at End of Life in Ireland. Are we good or bad at dealing with it? This is an area that is of interest to many individuals. So far the Forum on End of Life Team has informally contacted funeral directors, emergency services, legal and human rights groups, older age organisations, critical illness groups, and organisation with interests in farming, architecture, business, banking, nursing, trade unionism, palliative care.....the list goes on.

The response so far has been gratifying. They are seeking written submissions from individuals and groups at submissions@endoflife.ie, or by post to Paul Murray, Forum Coordinator, Irish Hospice Foundation, 32 Nassau Street, Dublin 2. The deadline is Friday, February 20th. For further information or to comment, please ring 01 6755970.

Organisations can also apply to submit presentations to workshops in Dublin for various categories of Irish life over the year starting in March. To find out more about this please contact paul.murray@hospice-foundation.ie or Linda.collins@hospice-foundation.ie, or telephone 01 6755970. The website is www.endoflife.ie

Contributions from people and groups in the disability sector would be particularly welcome.

The Forum is being launched on March 11th by President Mary McAleese in Dublin. The Forum's Chairperson is Marian Finucane. Gabriel Byrne, the actor, is Patron.

When the Forum is over, when its report is written and has gone out for consultation, a National Coalition on End of Life is being set up. This will be in 2010. The success of the National Coalition will depend very much on the quality and quantity of submissions to the Forum.

Shine – Supporting People Affected by Mental Ill Health (formerly Schizophrenia Ireland).

Schizophrenia Ireland will operate under a new name with effect from 1st February 2009.

Since 2005, Schizophrenia Ireland has been conducting an ongoing internal review of its structure, image and performance. One of the conclusions of that review was that the organisation needed to refresh their public image in order for them to be as responsive as possible to the needs of the people they serve. In arriving at the decision to change to a new operating title the research suggested that the organisation should identify an image that was positive, inclusive and non-stigmatising.

It is important also to note that Shine will continue to support all those people affected by mental ill health as per the organisations mission and objectives.

With effect from the 1st February the new website can be accessed at www.shineonline.ie. For further information contact Kahil Thompson-Coyle on 01 8601620 or email ktompson@shineonline.ie.

Dublin Community Television

Dublin Community Television (DCTV) is currently making a new TV series called "Invisible". This is a four part documentary series on disability. It will challenge the idea that people are disabled and instead suggest that it is society that has the disability in its inability to cater for and accept differences in people. Some of the issues that the programme is covering have emerged while working within the different disabled communities and include areas such as "Access to Education", "Family", "Sexuality and Relationships" and "Disability and Media".

DCTV is a non-profit, members co-operative station which is open to anyone who would like to join and offers a space for communities to have a place to have their say. The station broadcasts twenty-four seven on the NTL digital network on channel 802.

If you know of any Dublin-based families or individuals with disabilities, who might like to participate in the episode around "Sexuality and Relationships" please contact their researcher Jacqui Johnston at: jjmedia@eircom.net or tel: 0863836190.

Brainwave: One Training Course for Health Professionals in Epilepsy & Administration of Buccal Midazolam.

This course has been developed in conjunction with the Joint Epilepsy Council of the UK and Ireland (JEC) guidelines.

The aim of the course is that delegates develop a greater understanding of epilepsy and are instructed in the administration of Buccal Midazolam medication the delegates will be observed and tested throughout the day; successful delegates will be issued a certificate of attendance.

For Further information contact Ashley Butler Phone: 01 455 7500 or Email: info@epilepsy.ie.

"INSPIRING WOMEN" Celebrating 30 Years of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Woman

Croke Park Conference Centre 5th March 2009

Organised by the National Women's Council of Ireland and Banulacht

This year to mark International Women's Day there will be a national conference bringing local, national and international speakers together with women's groups from community development and community education organisations, non-governmental organisations, national organisations, individual women, feminist activists and all those interested in feminism and development from a local and a global perspective.

For further information contact Banulacht on 01 – 8723039 / banulach@iol.ie.

International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) 7th European Conference

Living in a Changing Europe

Venue: Trinity College, Dublin

Date: 5th to 10th July 2009

To be hosted by: St. Joseph's Centre for the Visually Impaired, Dublin.

The focus of the Conference will be on early intervention, education of children and the rehabilitation of adults, multi-disabled, deaf-blind and elderly people.

Conference Themes

- What are the changes for Europe today and for the future?
- What are the changing demands for the person with a visual impairment?
- What are the implications for professionals?

Ancillary Conference Activities

An exciting social programme will be on offer allowing delegates an opportunity to sample the best in Irish hospitality and culture.

For further information on the Conference, or to register please go to www.icevidublin2009.org.

Traineeships for people with disabilities at the European Commission

The European Commission is launching a traineeship for people with disabilities in order to facilitate their professional integration. The purpose of this action is :

- to offer persons with disabilities a working experience as a trainee in the European Commission, thereby enhancing their opportunities for future employment;
- to allow them to become familiar with the workings of the European Institutions;
- to apply the European Commission's equal opportunities principles to young university graduates with disabilities ;
- to raise awareness of disability among Commission staff and to remove barriers to the integration of people with disabilities;
- to provide the European Commission with the contribution and positive experience that disabled trainees will bring to its work and culture.

Here is the link where the complete information can be found: http://ec.europa.eu/stages/index_en.htm.

For any question please contact: eac-stages@ec.europa.eu.

FUNDING

International Fund for Ireland

The International Fund for Ireland ("the Fund") is an independent international organisation set up by the British and Irish Governments in 1986. The Fund's objectives are:-

- To promote economic and social advance; and
- To encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland.

The International Fund for Ireland is seeking applications for Building Foundations -Community Based Economic & Social Regeneration Programme.

For further information: <http://www.internationalfundforireland.com/>

For Further updates in relation to funding please view the DFI Funding Section on our website. http://www.disability-federation.ie/information_funding.htm

Newsletters

For information please contact the relevant organisation directly.

Ability - Newsletter of the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, Tel: 01 4572329, E-mail: info@iasbah.ie

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: info@arthritisisreland.ie

Aspire - Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland. 01-8780027/9, E-mail: admin@aspire-irl.org

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511, E-mail: office@asthmasociety.ie

Brainstorm - Migraine Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8064121, E-mail: info@migraine.ie

Brainwave - Quarterly Newsletter, Tel: 01 4557500,

E-mail: info@epilepsy.ie

Care Alliance Ireland - E-mail: ndo@carealliance.ie

Clar na nÓg - National Youth Council of Ireland Tel: 01-4784122
E-mail: info@nyci.ie

Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland -
www.cleft.ie/newsletter/index.htm, Tel: (01) 2848227,
E-mail: georginawade@cleft.ie

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: info@activelink.ie, Tel: +1 667 7326

Connect - Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. E-mail: info@imnda.ie
Freefone 1800 403 403

Community Workers' Co-operative – Community Work News. E-mail:
info@cwci.ie, Tel: +353 (0) 91 779 030

Cornerstone - Homeless Agency -
<http://www.homelessagency.ie/research/cornerstone.asp>, Tel: 01 703610
E-mail: homeless@dublincity.ie

Cumhacht - People with Disabilities in Ireland
http://www.pwdi.ie/news_events/newsletter/index.htm, E-mail: info@pwdi.ie
Tel: 01-8721744

Debra Ireland Newsletter, Tel: 01 678 5044, E-mail: info@debraireland.org

Down Syndrome Ireland - Tel: 01-8730999, E-mail: info@downsyndrome.ie

Enable Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 1850 204 304 E-mail:
communications@enableireland.ie

Equality News - Tel: 01-4173333, E-mail: info@equality.ie

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: info@irishdeafociety.ie. Tel: +353 1860 18

Féach - Support to parents of blind and visually impaired children. Tel: 01 493 1896, E-mail: info@feach.ie

Fighting Blindness - Tel: 01 7093050, E-mail:
avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie

Frontline of Learning Disability -Tel: 01-2862649. E-mail:
frontline@indigo.ie

GROWing - Information on Mental Health, Tel: 1890 474 474,
E-mail: info@grow.ie

Guidelines - Irish Guide Dogs Association. Tel: 021 4878200 E-mail:
info@guidedogs.ie

Headway Ireland - National Association for Acquired Brain Injury -'Making Headway', Tel: 01-8102066, E-mail: info@headway.ie

Heart News: - Newsletter of Irish Heart Foundation. Tel: 01 668 5001
E-mail: info@irishheart.ie.

Heartstrings - Newsletter of Heart Children Ireland, published quarterly,
Tel: 1850 217017 E-mail: heartchildren@eircom.net

Heatwave - Irish Raynauds Scleroderma Society,
E-mail: info@irishraynauds.com, Tel: 01 2020184

HOPE - Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland. Tel: 01-872 1303, E-mail: hdai@indigo.ie

Inclusion Ireland - Tel: 01 8559891, E-mail: info@inclusionireland.ie

Irish Deaf News - Irish Deaf Society. Minicom: 01-8601910; 01-8601878; E-mail: info@irishdeafociety.ie

Irish Wheelchair Association - 'Spokeout' , Tel: 01-8186 400, E-mail:
Joanna.marsden@iwa.ie

Kerry Network of People with Disabilities - Network News 066-7180611,
E-mail: kerryPWDI@eircom.net

MS News—Newsletter of MS Ireland. Tel: 01 6781600, E-mail:
info@ms-society.ie

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland - MDI News Update Tel: 01-8721501, E-mail: info@mdi.ie

DeafHear.ie - Link Magazine - Tel: 01 8723800, E-mail:
info@deafhear.ie, Minicom: (01) 817 5777

NCBI News - Newsletter of the National Council for the Blind of Ireland,
Tel: 01 8307033, E-mail: press@ncbi.ie, www.ncbi.ie

Neuro News - Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8726338, E-mail: nfaireland@eircom.net

People First - Central Remedial Clinic Tel: 01-8057400
E-mail: vmmcutch@crc.ie

Post Polio Support Group - Newsletter, Tel: 071 64791
E-mail: newsletter@ppsg.ie

Poverty Today - Combat Poverty Agency. Tel: 01-670 6746

Rehab News -Tel: 01-2057200 E-mail: dara.duffy@rehab.ie

Simon News - Simon Community, Tel: 01-6711606
E-mail: info@simoncommunity.com

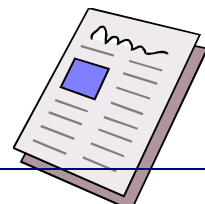
S.I. News - Schizophrenia Ireland, Tel: (0)1 8601620
E-mail: info@sirl.ie

Social Housing - Irish Council for Social Housing Tel: 01-6618334; E-mail: info@icsh.ie

Speaking up for Advocacy – Citizens Information Board Newsletter on advocacy. Tel: 01 6059035, E-mail: mairide.woods@comhairle.ie or davin.roche@comhairle.ie

Volunteer Stroke Scheme News- Tel: 01-4559036.
E-mail: info@strokescheme.ie

Wheel E-Bulletin Tel: 01- 454 8727,
E-mail: info@wheel.ie





Disability Federation of Ireland is a national support and representation mechanism for voluntary disability sector organisations, covering all areas of disability and disabling conditions. There are currently over 100 voluntary disability organisations in the DFI Membership.

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